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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1239

UNCLAS VILNIUS 000323

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FOR OES/ETC ROWENA WATSON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETRD](#) [KSCA](#) [SENV](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: CITES: LITHUANIA FOLLOWING EU LEAD, EXCEPT ON EELS

REF: SECSTATE 57912

We delivered reftel points to Selemonas Paltanavicius and Eugenijus Leonavicius, Head and Chief Desk Officer, respectively, of the Ministry of Environment's Biological Diversity Division, on May 9. Paltanavicius told us that, in general, the GOL and the EU are interested in increasing the number of species protected by CITES. Leonavicius explained that Lithuania would follow the EU lead and most likely would vote to keep Bobcats in Appendix II and to support adding Sawfish to Appendix I and Pink and Red Coral to Appendix II. He explained that, despite the USFWS study, the EU feels that keeping the Bobcat in Appendix II helps protect the European Lynx. Leonavicius added that the GOL's priority issue for the June CITES conference is the European Eel, which many Lithuanians consider a delicacy. The GOL wants to include only the young of the species in Appendix II, even though the EU supports including the whole species in Appendix II.

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